

“Thy Neighbor as Thyself.”

A SERMON

BEFORE THE

American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions,

AT THE

SEVENTY-FOURTH ANNUAL MEETING,

HELD AT

DETROIT, MICHIGAN, OCTOBER 2, 1883.

BY

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YALE COLLEGE, NEW HAVEN, CONN.

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SERMON.

“THOU SHALT LOVE THY NEIGHBOR AS THYSELF.” *Mark xii : 31,*
Leviticus xix : 18.

MEN AND BRETHREN: In announcing this plain sentence as the text of the following discourse, allow me the privilege of an introduction to it in the use of a somewhat violent supposition. Let Christianity be withdrawn. Suppose that instead of being here tonight with our eyes on the map of the world, forming plans for its conversion to Christ, there is no Christ nor Christian Church. The gospel is no more. The vexations of the learned over miracle and inspiration are at an end; the rivalries of the sects have gone down in a general indifference; missions are abandoned, reform has become impotent, in so far as it depended upon the Christian dynamic. What would be left? The world would still be here, as firm under the human foot as ever; day and night, summer and winter, seed-time and harvest would not cease. And man as a moral being would be here, behaving as he has behaved where the gospel has not corrected him. Under the One who is over all, law would still be here, reigning unto life and death, over all who by their very make find themselves its natural subjects. The gospel of Christ not having made the world, nor human nature, nor enacted the great law of right and wrong with its award and doom, these things would still continue under its supposed withdrawal.

Judging from what has occurred, one thing would noticeably characterize the world without the gospel—a lack of neighborly thought and feeling. If a Greece should have a more elevated life by a culture in the beautiful, she would be found keeping it to herself. If a barbarian desired a painted Hebe to refine his taste, or a sculptured Jupiter to embolden his manner, he must go to Greece for it. If a Plato has a superior thought, those outside the Greek colonization must translate it for themselves. To the poor no Plato is preached. If Asia should have any light on conduct or

destiny, it is light for Asia, not for the world. The great wall of China has not only kept Tartar invasion out, it has kept Confucian wisdom in. Keep the world as it was, touching the neighborly virtues, and while at this late date, a European might be found going to one foreign land to sell knives, and to another to buy tea, an American sailing here to sell wheat, and there to buy silk ; yet of nation entering nation on no other errand than one of good will, we should see and hear nothing. The historic fact is, the Buddhists and Confucians never came near us, nor our ancestors, with their celestial wisdom. The fine sentiment of Epictetus, "I am a man and nothing of humanity is alien to me," died as it was born, a fine sentiment. It never sent Rome out upon any errand in behalf of humanity. The prominent missionaries of an earlier time were Xerxes's fire-ships, and Cæsar's eagles.

Let us now suppose that this world which, historically, seems to be so much more easily moved by its natural antipathies than by its natural sympathies, should somehow get possession of the command which furnishes the text. Come from where it may, its arrival could hardly pass without exciting some interest. Granting that the hostile passions are more vigorous than the amiable affections, man has some amiable affections, and as sure as he has a heart within him and a neighbor without him, at some time he must come to some consideration of this text. Had these words been first picked up on a stray piece of paper, without any impressive surroundings, without anything urging men to investigate their origin, they would have brought with them a certain undefined authority. The very words suggest that their author knows this present world, knows its inhabitants, their character, their proclivities, their chief ailment as a race, knows also what would promote their general well-being.

But, while this supposition of the anonymous and accidental origin of the law may kindle our interest in its appearance among us, it must not keep us from an examination of its real origin and import. Much as we value a command carrying its authority in its own contents, we value, in an equal degree, a command laid on by a lawful authority ; that is, by one with the ability, the opportunity, and the disposition to exercise authority. It is from such a source that this law of our common life professes to reach us. It is first quoted from the book of Leviticus, xix : 18, where it stands as follows : "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself : I am the Lord."

Whether of any use or not, this authority goes with the law ; whether what is here claimed for the law can be established or not, one thing is clear, the law and its proclaimed authority go together. What reveals the one reveals the other ; so, if this rule of conduct is an invention and no revelation, the inventor of the good rule is also the inventor of the bad authority ; for bad it is, if there is nothing in it but the word of a man.

Where the law stands in Mark's gospel, it is in the following connection : "And one of the scribes came and having heard them reasoning together asked him : Which is the first commandment of all? And Jesus answered him, The first of all commandments is, Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord : and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength : this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these." Here we are to notice that these two commandments are not linked together in the Pentateuch, as they are in the gospels. The law of love to God is quoted from Deuteronomy, the law of love to the neighbor from Leviticus, where it is inserted among certain miscellaneous prohibitions. Our Lord, however, makes no distinction between those books, calling them both the law ; and, from them, republishing these two commandments (evidently worded at different times, and promulgated in different circumstances), and under His own seal distinguishing them as the first and second commandments. He volunteers the further sanction that they cannot be excelled. Strictly viewed, the text is this second commandment according to our Lord — a rule of life touching our neighbor, than which none can be greater. And, in preaching upon it, my first business is to define its terms, in so far as the purposes of this discourse call for definition ; and in the next place, to consider the law thus defined, as it bears upon the cause before us tonight.

A law, or as this is called, a commandment, is a precept uttered by authority for the conduct of those under that authority. It is not a mere precept, however ; it is that, but more : it is an injunction assuming and affirming an obligation to obey. Moreover, it is attended by a sanction of reward to the obedient, and a sanction of punishment upon the disobedient. This law of love to the neighbor has all these characteristics. It comes to those under it without

any advice to try it by way of experiment, comes as an injunction, to live in a certain way ; it is an imperative, objective, unalterable, statute law. A personal ruler, claiming to be the Lord, says to his personal subject : "Thou shalt." Here the right to command is asserted ; the obligation to obey is anticipated ; the sanctions on obedience and disobedience implied. "Thou shalt love." The extraordinary nature of such a command becomes clear as we get the sense in which "love" is employed in the explanatory clauses of the law. "Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbor, neither rob him. Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling-block before the blind . . . thou shalt not stand against the blood of thy neighbor . . . thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbor, and not suffer sin upon him ; thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

"Thy neighbor," and who is my neighbor? That is explained for us by the Divine Commentator in the tale of the Good Samaritan, in which he shows that the neighbor is not merely the next dweller — the nigh boor — not one of the same nation, race, or religion as myself ; but a human being anywhere I may find him, and in any condition in which I can do him good. I am distinctly told to "go and do" what I can for him ; and the man I do this for, has an evidence in my action that I have the true idea of neighborhood.

"Love him as myself." Does this mean that I am to love my neighbor with exactly the same kind of love as I show to myself? That cannot be, because my neighbor is not myself ; nor have I the same care of him as I have of myself. I am peculiarly intrusted with my own self-hood ; and it is impossible to share my duty to myself with those around me. If it is selfish to have this peculiar care of my own self, it is just as selfish in me to be a self ; that is, to have a personality distinct from every other personality. Does it mean then that I am to share equally with my neighbor whatever I possess? "To keep this law," a critic says, "I ought to give the first beggar I meet the half of my money, the half of all I have." But in this assertion the critic makes more than one mistake. For, in the first place, by what he says, he assumes that I have all the money I possess to myself, and am to spend it on myself ; the proposed division is not exact, then, if I do not hold all my money to be spent on myself. Further, why should the first beggar I meet get the half ; that would leave only the half of what is left for the next object of charity. Besides, one has neighbors other than the utterly needy, to whom something is due ; and to divide

instantly all one owns would leave the giver without the means of a sustained benevolence. Again, there are those with claims on our love that are not satisfied by anything divisible ;— neighbors whose interests are wider than their present needs. Moreover, there are other laws than this to obey ; and it will not show a very thoughtful consideration of their claims, if one's means of action are depleted at the proposed rate. The good Samaritan whose praise is on every tongue reserved enough of his fortune to meet the future of his wounded neighbor. "Take care of him," said he, as he met the present charges, "and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again I will repay thee." The plain truth is, the love here demanded for the neighbor is neither love of exactly the same quality as we show to ourselves, nor love in exactly the same quantity as we show to ourselves ; but we are to love the neighbor with as just a proportion of love toward him as we show to ourselves. We are to do for him as we would do for ourselves. We are not to defraud, nor injure, nor suffer sin upon him ; more than that, we are to do him all the good that we have opportunity to do, caring for his interests as we care for our own, and promoting his well-being as we promote our own.

To the bearing of this law upon the conversion of the world to Christ, we now bend our consideration.

First, it is great account to us in this work, simply as a law ; that is, as already defined, a requirement evoking the feeling of obligation, and accompanied by sanctions adjusted by the law-giver. The requirement now upon us we find awaiting us, enacted before we are born ; and the moment we come to understand it we all alike become aware that we ought to obey it. This we consider an arrangement of great advantage for the law itself ; for the subjects of it ; and for the object of it. Let us look first at the advantage coming from the independent origin of the law. Herein is secured its dignity, stability and far-reaching efficiency. Whatever may change this cannot change : "The foundation of God standeth sure." Those under it not enacting it, they cannot abolish it ; not framing its obligations and sanctions, they can neither deny nor avoid them. Emanating from the author of their life, this law for the direction of that life cannot but commend itself as fit and proper, to all who acknowledge their Maker's right to direct the lives that he has created. Indeed so reasonable and natural does it appear to those for whom it is enacted, some have

been led to propose an origin for it in the human race itself. They suggest that the intuition of our obligation to obey it has come to us by way of the good that it has brought to our ancestors. Somehow by inheriting its effects in them, we now start with our present spontaneous allegiance to it in our thought and conscience; so that we need not dignify nor empower this law with any such origin as the Bible claims for it.

On this let it be said that we are keenly alive to the importance of the great doctrine of heredity, and we are grateful for its aid in explaining the course, if not the origin, of a great deal that calls for explanation. But this proposal, to find an origin for this law by heredity, does not commend itself to us, as being in that ordinarily lucid way of accounting for things. As the dignity and force of this law is largely dependent upon the truthfulness of its own claim to be a divine law, with no ordinary interest we ask, How did our ancestors come to beget in us what, according to this theory, they had not in themselves? For, at one time, the supposition is, this was not an intuitively righteous law, it has only become so by long practice. And, granting, that by slow degrees, the human race has worked itself up from Cain's sullenness, and "Am I my brother's keeper?" to Moses' good sense, and "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," may we ask what had the race been doing in the manufacture of moral intuitions between Moses and Christ, that He, the best judge of our humanity, after thousands of years, said there was nothing to revise or improve in that piece of legislation? And, moreover, since his name and opinions have such weight in the world, is it out of place to ask, on what did Christ base his assertion that this law cannot be excelled? Why should a progress in moral ideas be arrested at this point?

But, of all our needs of explanation upon the tracing of this command to a purely human origin, is the relation of this theory to the facts of life, as they face us now. Confessedly, the world's idea of this law, and the world's assent to its claims, are far ahead of its practice of them. And, in so far as history shows, it has ever been so. Our trouble is this, if it was by the discovered excellence of the law's working that our present intuitions have become part of ourselves, where are those creative virtues nowadays that they do not stand by the intuitions of their own creation? Whence the wail of humanity that it knows the right so well, yet follows the wrong? May our ignorance be borne with as we fur-

ther ask : How can that be, if it was solely out of its own experience of the right that this intuition of it is now the property of race ? And, what is the explanation of the singular fact, that the law of heredity acts so faithfully in the transmission of the intuition, and so unfaithfully in the transmission of the performance, or more strictly, the power of performance ; especially since out of the long and successful performance, the universal and unerring intuition came. The average man, with his inherited idea of the whole as greater than a part, has along with it seemingly inherited a corresponding obedience to it. May we ask why the same undeviating moral action is not a joint heir with the moral intuition, since both moral and mathematical ideas are supposed to be formed by the same process—a rational “will” being excluded from that process, as rigidly as a series of purely mechanical sequences can exclude it.

But, according to the Scriptures, and to our advantage, as subjects of the law, we are delivered from all uncertainty respecting its origin and foundation. “He hath showed thee, O man, what is good,” and in doing so, he said : “Thou shalt love thy neighbor.” The very sound has the blessing of the imperative in it—even the imperative of the Supreme Love. Under it, we are freed from the degrading idea of being in a tyranny of drift, and also from the petty tyrannies of our own moods. Our obedience is not left to our own changing sensibilities ; to our own hesitating inferences, from our own imperfect inductions ; nor to the next novel observation any man, or any age, may make on what we ought to do. Indeed, one mark of this law’s divinity and one secret of its power, is the absence from its terms of all secondary considerations why it should be obeyed. In the Old Testament it has the name of the Supreme Lawgiver appended to it ; in the New Testament it has Christ’s indorsement ; and thus it stands in command of what of all things a man supposes he has the right to control for himself—his love. Does one say, “I have few neighbors who will love me in return, and why should I love them ?” Does another say, “No neighbors ever loved me, and why should I love them ?” Do some say, “There are whole tribes of neighbors who show nothing in them worth the loving, why spend or be spent for them ?” Do others say, “Whole nations of neighbors have we, well enough off as they are, why go offering them our love ?” One and all have their answer here, there is nothing in the law—that is, in the sim-

ple imperate — that consults any man's peculiarity of position, knowledge, feeling, judgment, taste, or opinion — not even his belief, his hope, or his most exalted surmise. This, to some, may sound like despotism. It does ; for it is despotism, but of the most gracious sort, the despotism not of Force but of Love. The more of its own way it has, the greater the blessedness of being under it. For, what can equal that subject's privilege, who is under a law of love ; with a Lawgiver over him who is nothing but love ; who so hems him in to obedience, that he finds his very nature wronged, if it is not allowed to obey ; who lets him see, in every contemplated escape from love's control, only a prophecy of his own wretchedness. In fact, if despotism is insisted on in the obligation to love, then every one is his own despot ; for every one lays it on himself. If there is any better way of accounting for this than that under the adorable Sovereignty of God, man is made in the divine image, we wait to hear it. As it is, it seems to us that the reflection of the Supreme Love in man, thus justifies itself, by the reflection of the Divine Reason, also in him by his Maker's will.

As we leave this aspect of the law to the obedient, let us notice how its authorized expounders check any possible thought of soaring over it. "I have not found so great *faith*, no, not in Israel," said Jesus of a man who showed that he knew what *obedience to authority* meant, and what it would effect. And in the coronation hymn of Love, as chanted by Paul, all gifts and graces are reduced to nothing, if love does not animate them. And, in the same vein of suggestiveness upon the value of a loving law revealed for conduct, is the apostle's remark upon some who were inclined to let it go for a more spiritual guidance. "If any man thinketh himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him take knowledge of the things that I write unto you, that they are the commandments of the Lord." In view of this discouragement to fanaticism, this repression of excess, this reduction of eccentricity to regularity, through a spread of love by law, it is singular that those who have made a business of showing such love, have had to bear the reproach of being fanatical, and extreme, and eccentric. Missionary societies have been stigmatized as companies of the mildly fanatical, engaged in sending out "small detachments of maniacs," for the disturbance of nations in the infantile innocence of a primitive civilization. Where this law of love to the neighbor reigns, of all sober-minded, orderly, law-abiding communities, a missionary gathering

is the one that might be expected to escape the contempt of eccentricity.

Time does not permit enough to be said upon the value of this command, as a statute law in the prosecution of our great work. Like the banyan tree, this commanded love, as it spreads, lets down its own supports. Those reached by it, cannot but be favorably impressed by a goodness that blesses them by commandment. By that fact they are taught that the same law is over themselves; and that all their neighbors are the objects of a like love from them; and, by consequence, these neighbors are bound to turn towards them with a like love. How benign is that goodness, which in commanding me to love my neighbor as myself, commands every neighbor I shall ever have, to love me as himself, "obliges him to love me, authorizes him as my keeper, arms him as my defender, pledges him as my surety, adorns him as my example, couples him as my co-heir," both of us heirs of God, joint heirs with Christ. Behold! what manner of love is this! Behold! what manner of law is this! Must they not have their origin in Him, in whom Law and Love are one—even God!

I remark, in the next place, that this law of love to the neighbor is of interest to us in the work before us, as a law of progressive application. The value of the law, as imposed by the Supreme Love, we have just considered. Of great advantage it is, to have the duty of love based in the Unchangeable and the Eternal. "I am the Lord," lays down the ordinance for our obedience at the origin of things. And there the one unvarying factor of the law rests.

But we are now at a turning-point in our meditations upon the text. We have to take up aspects of it that have blessings of another sort than the blessings of immutability. There is the blessing of change in the number and positions of the objects on which to fasten this commanded love. True the words "change" and "progress" are not in the commandment; but the things are there. The Lord, whose law it is, has a providence which enlightens us on a great deal of his legislation; and Providence assures us, if we need any assurance, that this law is anything but a barren imperative, suggestive only of a stationary, mechanical obedience. Along with "love," the substance of the law, stands "thy neighbor," the object of the law; and no obedience is possible without attention to him; for since "love" is essentially communicative, to say that a neighbor is loved and yet nothing

is done for him, is a contradiction. Broadly viewed, our neighbors are our living fellow-men; the dead are gone from the same conditions of existence as ourselves, and hence are beyond our reach. With the dead the distant used to be classed; but not now; for by the progress of events, all the living, if not within our reach, are within our influence, and when we will, we may do them good. It is not a fanciful anticipation of this fact, we trust, but a real one, that we see in our Lord's exposition of the word "neighbor." In his inquirer's mind there seemed to be no thought of the widening that the Saviour gave it. Exclusiveness, once the Jew's antidote against his circumstances, had become the bane of his culture; and that a contiguous Samaritan might be neighbor to him was a revelation indeed. But why wonder at the Jew, O we of little faith. Who among ourselves, until an expanding providence had made the world one neighborhood of nations, believed that the world had in it what Jesus has taught to be in it. "Not to me only." "He hath broken down the middle wall of partition. . . . Ye are therefore no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints." "Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, barbarian, Scythian, bond or free." These sayings from Paul, and the late confession from Peter, "Now I see that God is no respecter of persons, but that in every nation men may be accepted of Him"—even the Saviour's own words, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," had all to be followed up by an interpreting providence, before the church stood face to face with the fact, that the whole world is open to neighborly approach; and that into the whole world, in order to reach every creature, this loving law is ordained to go. But geographical distance is only one separating thing, that has virtually gone: separating prejudices of race, color, caste, and degrees of culture are following. The essentials of manhood are fast becoming the simple and universal constituents of neighborhood, and these more modern changes mean something in the bringing of humanity to Christ, even as their preceding geographical changes meant something.

But, in the utterance of the law, the pronouns "thou" and "thy" call us back to personal duty; yet, as we see, to personal duty with a world before us, awaiting the offices of love, and since from the nature of the case, the one cannot touch the all, counsel must be taken upon some limit to the numbers reached. If we

can learn anything from those first sent out among the nations, we may have some light on our present duty. Turning to the times in which the earnest of this neighborhood of nations came, we watch with intense interest the direction given to those who went out, not to give society new socialisms, nor politics new adjustments, not to attack kings and great corporations, but to take mankind neighbor by neighbor, and bless each, as the bearer of the new love was blest himself. The same question must have faced the Pauls and Barnabases as faces us. With our one life to spend on the whole, where shall we go ; and why to one place rather than another? The beginning was Jerusalem, but, tracking the first missionary's steps, we see them in the north and west of Asia Minor. Back to the starting-place, confirming as he goes, the pioneer of all our missions went. And then comes a new lesson ; this time on where not to go. He assayed to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit suffered him not. Under better guidance than his own, he is kept from wandering along the shores of the Black Sea, and (I speak as a man) likely to be shut up in the wilds of the Caucasus, where neighbors were few and far between. Instead of this, he is drawn back to the center and brought to Troas. Beside the *Ægean* Sea he was further prepared to speak to the very largest numbers of the very best minds the world then contained. Witness the outcome of his third missionary journey. Back to Greece he had to go ; for Corinth and Athens had to know of a wisdom not of this world. The fact is, the apostle of the Gentiles spent his missionary life mainly where population was densest, where intellect was at its best, where most neighbors could be reached, and neighbors too, whose influence would be the widest over others. Prisoner as he was left in Rome, it was as a missionary prisoner, whose neighborly love found a way through those shackled to him, into Cæsar's household. And, it is in imitation of this that the church has continued to send her missionaries into the great meeting-places of man. India, touching Burmah on the east, Thibet on the north, and Afghanistan and Persia on the west — China with Further India on the south, Mongolia on the north, Japan and the islands that no man can number, off her eastern coast — Turkey, dense with the hosts of Islam — Africa, isolated in a solitary grandeur, yet made neighbor by the rapacities of many lands, teeming with millions, of all races the one susceptible of love — these great centers of humanity are the coveted

among the mission fields, as they ought to be, since in them and from them, may more love be spread, by those who have but one life to give, and one generation to serve, according to the will of God.

And, upon our love to those not within our reach, let me say, we can miss bestowing it, only by withholding it from our effort to reach them. By the progress of civilization, if I pay a certain sum of money into a bank in this city, or pass my intention to pay it, that money or that intention, is at my desire reproduced in Calcutta, to the very mill of the amount, to the very date of my thought of payment. Commercially, it is understood that what is done here, is done there. And the personality of missionary endeavor may be looked at in some such way. What we send, will go. If we give money, the money will do money's work in the person of our commissioner; if we give no love, that is, good will, no earnest desire, prayer, solicitude for the neighbor himself, the neighbor is not reached. The intention not being forwarded, it cannot be presented to the correspondent. Let no one say, then, that he cannot reach a neighbor because he cannot go himself. In these days of progressive appliances he can do what can be done, what is done, what must be done, if this and many a law besides, are to be kept in their spirit, as well as in their letter. Let the heart, desirous to express its love, know that the same advancing providence that brought the neighbor near, has brought just as near the means to bless him. And shall we forget that we have a life in a realm, where a thought may bless another heart without a metallic wire to carry it; a realm in which, "through the Eternal Spirit," the heart's desire and prayer may be sent to distant empires without an audible word.

But that I may further expand the preceding thought let me remark on the interest this law has to us as a law of varying adaptability. Robert Moffat, lying prone on the clay floors of the Bechuanas, becoming all but one of them in their low estate; that he might lift them up to a Christian manhood; David Scudder, studying Indian philosophy at Andover, that he might on landing in India, bring a sharpened intellect into contact with Brahminical acuteness; Bridgeman, in the thick of Asiatic ferments; and Livingstone, praying in loneliness by his African bedside, illustrate the variety of adaptations that may be called for, under the one unvarying appeal for love to the neighbor as the neighbor is found. And

not only have the numbers and the positions of the law's objects changed, but as we understand the terms of the law, we are personally enjoined not to be contented with one adaptation of blessing to the neighbor, but to change our manifestations of blessing as we are changed ourselves. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." But no man is the same self in one given year, that he is in another. His fortune has changed, his position, his influence, above all, his character is changed ; his beliefs, his hopes, his visions of the future, and his power further to believe, to hope, to see, are all of a higher or lower type ; and the same self not being present, neither the same proportions, nor the same manifestations of love to the neighbor, are either demanded or rendered.

This, of all aspects of the law, is perhaps the most taxing and the most searching to the individual subject ; for it invests him with the measure of his own obedience, and cites him into his own presence to adjudicate between himself and his neighbor, in a claim of love. As we understand it, by this feature of the law, we are not at liberty to remain in ignorance of our neighbors' condition. If we do remain in such ignorance, it must be for a reason which we must report to ourselves, and we shall not stand high in our own esteem, if we dread the truth, lest it may cost us something to relieve the necessities, or share the ills, or pity the misfortunes, of those on the same plane of moral being as ourselves. Moreover, we are to give him the benefit of a new method of blessing even if it is an innovation upon the methods that blessed ourselves. If our present power to bless is greater than that of our past, even though that past had blessing enough for ourselves, that may not be enough for those we can reach now. A love that is not blinded by an intellectual vanity, that sees nothing good in what did not bring us good, will devise the best that can be devised, for the day and the men that now are. Because there were no missionary steamers proposed as an aid to our foreign work forty years ago, it does not follow that we shall have none now. If only a quarter of a million of dollars a year was raised for our general missionary fund a quarter of a century ago, a million a year may be asked now, since three quarters of a million of new reasons for it have appeared.

But while the law, thus understood, enjoins us to adapt our love to all possible forms of blessing, the same love does not allow us to ply the neighbor with novelties by way of experiment, nor to

relegate to a subordinate place, the means of blessing which have been already approved.

This being so, we must insist upon the truth that has saved ourselves, as the main instrumentality in the neighbor's salvation. One most important part of our work has been our missionaries' interest in the Bible, as the power of God unto all the salvation we know. Buildings our neighbors can be saved without; great organizations they can be saved without; almost all external aids to good order they can live without, and have peace, order, good government within. With the word of God, men can live; without it, no people that we know of, have had more than a name to live. By consequence, it never has commended itself to us, as the best that can be done, to varnish a heathen civilization over with a religion of mere ceremonialism, and leave the hearts of the people unregenerated. Contrast Madagascar, and its twenty-five years of earnest culture under the word of God, with Japan in the seventy years of the Roman Catholic possession—from Xavier's entry in 1549 until the persecution in 1620—but with no Bible translated and put into the people's hands. In Madagascar, after as severe a persecution as modern times have known, including the burning of some and the hurling of others from rocks, at the persecutor's death the Christians were more numerous than before the persecution began; and the Bible, the means of their spiritual life, was still in their hands. On the other hand, in Japan, with a longer time to work in, at the close of a like persecution, the native Christians that were spared lapsed into heathenism, no Bible being theirs as the Holy Spirit's means of sustaining their fidelity to the truth. There seems to be no better explanation than this of the paralysis in the Nestorian effort to convert the Chinese. They had China and Central Asia from the fifth to the thirteenth century; and for two of these centuries, the eighth and ninth, they had in China no obstruction or complaint of proselytism from the government. But the only relic of the Nestorian movement is the tablet of A. D. 781; not a catechism, a liturgy, a law, or a Lord's Prayer remaining, much less any portion of the Word of Life. And the burden of history is the same everywhere; no Bible, no spiritual life; no Christ, no bread of life; no words of Christ, no spirit and life for the soul of man. Left without words "from the mouth of God," trying to live on food alone, man's spiritual vigor soon decreases, and his discipleship is "no more."

From such facts, and from the great principles under which we have been trained into an advancing life, this is clear, that since the world seems created to discipline its inhabitants to goodness, by the helping of one another, in order to render a neighbor a loving service, it is necessary to share with him our very self, at its very best. Only as the whole self gives a share of what it is, and does, and has, and can command, is witness borne to the heart's omnipotence. But when the genuine love is shown by the genuine man, then the Lawgiver shows that his law is like himself, the admiration even of those who own no subjection to it. Hear Hyder Ali, the scourge of the Carnatic, who, according to Mr. Burke, "drew from every quarter whatever a savage ferocity could add to the arts of destruction, and compounding all the materials of fury, havoc, and desolation into one black cloud, could hang till the hour of the tempest, upon the declivities of the mountains." This man who, according to the great orator, let down upon the plains of the Carnatic a storm of war and woe, the like of which no eye had seen, no heart conceived and no tongue could tell — even he, when bringing his enemies to terms in negotiating a treaty, could say: "Send me Swartz; send me the Christian missionary, for him only can I trust." My friends, no matter how black may be men's skins, or how black their hearts, all know the neighbor who has the love commanded in this law. And all men know the worthlessness of a sham love, that comes from an untouched heart. Hence, if Christ is in the love that the heart designs to spread, its first missionary hymn it should sing to itself, and after this manner:

Manasseh, Paul and Magdalene,
 All pardoned were by Thee.
 I read it and believe it, Lord,
 For Thou hast pardoned me.

With a heart thus enriched, the owner of it may go up or down the world, in the belief that others may be blest like himself; and loving them as he has been loved himself, he can be felt as a power for good. Whatever he presses upon his neighbor from that enriched heart will have the relish of salvation in it; for into whatever one has been changed, the neighbor that he loves has his measure of the change imparted unto him. My brethren, we here call to mind the prayer of Him who said, "For their sakes I sanctify myself — that they also might be sanctified through the truth."

But it is time to close, with the mention of one more feature of this law as of interest to us in consulting upon the conversion of the world, namely, that it is a law giving to those obeying it a constant suggestion of success. See of what it is made up — a self — a neighbor, with love between — and God over all blessed forever. There is not one hopeless object of thought in the composition. Here also are the components of all lasting improvement known to us, an eternal and unchangeable basis, and, connected with that, something ever advancing to a better condition. All is not in the immovable past; but something is: all is not in the changing present; but something is: all is not in the visions of the future; but something is. Thus we are held, held fast in God; thus we move, move onward to the better, for ourselves and others. And, as earnest of this law's anticipated subjugations, all grades of mind have already owned its sway. Under it have come down proud states like Rome; under it have been lifted up lowly islands like Hawaii. And, since some have been subdued and elevated, others may be; for almost all sorts of obstructions against Love's reign have been thrust in its way since "Bel bowed down, and Nebo stooped." Yet Love still lives to subdue, to elevate, to inspire, that succeeding generations may know for themselves how to conquer by its power. But, whatever the purpose of its slow and gradual conquest of mankind, looking at it, as something with means and forces in play for an end, there can be nothing before it, but a good law's eventual triumph. Simply as the best we know, coming into contact with the worst possible, it has a promise of overcoming; for doth not Nature itself teach us, that the stronger eventually puts aside the weaker? the living must be victor of the dead. See the green leaf of that plant in the soil, feet deep in corruption, see it come up in the face of the sublime mechanics of gravitation, see it defy all dead things to keep it still a leaf. It has life. And love is life, the life of God, for God is Love. Once all the love there is, was in God Himself; and while in Him it wrought itself out in blessing others equally with Himself, in so far as His opportunities allowed. Under Christ, that divine love shed abroad in our hearts is to find its way out to others, according to our opportunities. The nations, kindreds, tongues, and people are of equal value with ourselves; to love them as such, to draw them to the Saviour, who has saved ourselves, to give them the truth that purifies ourselves, this is the part we have to take, in getting them

clothed in white, to stand before the throne of God and of the Lamb.

Missionaries, Friends of Missions, Lovers of Mankind, I have no closing appeals ; my theme admits of none ; my aim is simply to leave on the Christian conscience that law than which, according to our Lord, none can be greater. That law is upon us ; the nations are our neighbors ; the Redeemer is with us. He will be with us "alway, even unto the end of the world," as we fulfill this Eternal Law of his own Eternal Love.

